

Maine College Transitions Project
College Transitions Syllabus

Title: Writing Skills for College Part I

Final Draft

November 30, 2005

The intent of this syllabus is to provide adult education program administrators and instructors with a suggested core and title for the provision of a college preparation/developmental course in the conventions of standard English usage. Transition courses are designed for high school graduates or GED recipients who intend to or are applying to postsecondary institutions.

It is expected that this course will match the needs of adult learners to prepare for and develop skills for placement testing and success in college level English composition courses. This effort should avoid the need to take a basic developmental course in writing at the postsecondary level.

Suggested contact hours: 45 – 60

Course Description:

Writing Skills for College Part I will cover conventions of standard English usage with their applications in writing sentences, paragraphs, and simple essays. Coursework will help students prepare for college placement examinations, specifically the Accuplacer Sentence Skills test.

The integrated course content should include:

Understanding Grammar

- Parts of Speech
- Noun plurals and possessives
- Pronoun case, number, person, reference, and agreement
- Verb tense and voice
- Modifiers
- Punctuation
- Mechanics

Because of the need for future academic applications, students should learn to use appropriate vocabulary and to apply the formal usage of parts of speech.

Understanding Sentences

- Types of sentences
- Clauses – independent and dependent
- Subject / verb agreement
- Subordination and coordination

Understanding Words

- Spelling
- Words often confused
- Gender reference

To ensure understanding of these concepts, application in context should be practiced and used. Students should learn not only the concepts but also understand why using language in a particular way is correct.

Suggested Text and Materials:

Langon, John and Janet M. Goldstein, *English Brushup*, 3rd Edition, McGraw Hill, ISBN 0-07-281890-5

Fawcett, Susan and Alvin Sandberg, *Grassroots with Readings*, Houghton Mifflin, ISBN 0618-11586-2

Wilson, Paige and Teresa Ferster Glazier, *The Least You Need to Know about English, Form A*, Harcourt, ISBN 0155080318

Silverman, Jay, Elaine Hughes, and Diana R. Wienbroer, *Rules of Thumb: A guide for Writers*, 2nd Edition, McGraw Hill, ISBN 0-07-057582-7

Sebranek, Patrick, Verne Meyer, and Dave Kemper, *Write Source 2000: A Guide to Writing, Thinking, & Learning*, Great Source Educational Publishing, Burlington, WI, ISBN: 066946774X

Hacker, Diana, *The Writer's Reference*, 5th Edition, Bedford/St. Martin's, ISBN 0312412622

Harris, Muriel, *Prentice Hall Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage*, 5th Edition, ISBN 0-13-184678-7

Recommended Curriculum Reference:

English 005: Basic Writing, Course outline from University of Maine at Augusta, by Julie Hendrickson.

Developmental Writing: DS012, Course syllabus from Kennebec Valley Community College/Fairfield Adult Education.

English 009: Developmental Writing, Course syllabus from USM (pending permission)

Placement Testing:

Although various cut scores are required at individual campuses of the Maine Community College System, we recommend Writing Skills for College Part I for students scoring less than 60 on the sentence skills section of the Accuplacer examination or less than 450 in Writing in a recent (within one year) GED test. These scores closely align with a 8.0 GE or 550 Scale Score on the TABE A.

Because of the need to prepare for and score well on placement examinations, error identification skills should be incorporated into instruction.

Sources:

Readiness for Comp I: Elaine Wright at USM.

Accuplacer Guide

SMCC Placement Rules

Initial Draft completed November 18, 2005, by the Transitions Writing Curriculum Committee:

Linda Clutterbuck

Julie Hendrickson

Sheila Reaman

Thelma Regan

Elizabeth Worden

Final Draft presented to the College Transitions Advisory Committee January 5, 2006.

Facilitator: Patrick O'Regan

por44@suscom-maine.net